

BAPTIST WOMEN IN MINISTRY OF NC

In Memory of an Advocate and Friend: The Kay Simpson Memorial Scholarship Endowment By Alicia Davis Porterfield

On November 14, 2006, Baptist women everywhere lost a dear friend—whether we knew her personally or not—when the Reverend Kay Simpson died unexpectedly at her home in Dunn, NC. Kay had done it all, from being a stockbroker to teaching children with disabilities to pastoring. And she shared her wealth of experience, her numerous talents, and her great love of Christ with all who knew her, especially blessing BWIM,NC where she served on the Board and as Convener. Please read more about her life in these pages, in the words of her dear friend and colleague, Lynn

Tillman, her fellow BWIM,NC member, Karen Metcalf, and in her obituary, which we have reprinted.

In memory of our dear friend Kay, BWIM,NC is naming our endowed scholarship fund after her. The endowed scholarship fund was originally Kay's idea and she brought it to fruition with the help of others. She was tireless in her efforts to ensure the success of the fund, sending out long e-mails written late at night on how we could be even better stewards of the money and involve churches across the state. Put simply, Kay had a vision of what BWIM,NC could do for women Di-

vinity students in our state and she was committed to doing all she could to fulfill the vision God had given to her.

Kay was always thinking of ways to bless others, and especially her sisters in ministry. As a single, second-career student, she knew well the blessing of a scholarship—not just the financial support, but also the emotional and spiritual support such a gift conveys. I can think of no better way to honor her memory and thank God for all the love we received through her, than to name our endowed scholarship after her. Knowing Kay, she would be

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Convocation 2007 “Gleaning from the Fields”

BWIM,NC members and friends gathered at Viewmont Baptist Church in Hickory for our Annual Convocation on March 16th. We found refuge from the rainy morning in the warmth of fellowship, making new connections and renewing old friendships and enjoying the pastries, juice, and coffee the church so graciously provided for us. Excited greetings and new introductions echoed as folks lined up to renew their dues (don't forget

to renew yours!) and learn about our new Kay Simpson Memorial Scholarship Endowment.

After plenty of talking and eating in true Baptist fashion, we gathered for business and worship. On the business side, we had good news: our balance on hand was \$4,176.25 and our total in the Simpson Memorial Endowment was \$16,381.82 (Goal: \$25,000). We said good-bye to retiring Board

members and welcomed new ones. The class of 2010 is Elizabeth Edwards, Terry Honeycutt, Johnnie Faye Jackson, Tim Moore, Kathy Naish, and Karen Sherin. Our new Convener is Alicia D. Porterfield and our Convener-Elect is Jeanell Cox.

Our worship service centered on the image of gleaning from Ruth, chapters one and two. After our Call to Worship and Opening Hymn, we

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Kay Simpson

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DUNN, N.C. – Rev. Beatrice Kay Simpson, 48, of 93 Rollingwood Drive, Dunn, died Tuesday, Nov. 14 at home. She was born Sept. 23, 1958.

Rev. Simpson served as a minister in several NC churches. She was serving as minister of music at Memorial Baptist Church in Buies Creek. Rev. Simpson also served as a preschool teacher's assistant at Lillington-Shawtown Elementary School in Lillington. She previously served as music minister at Waughtown Baptist Church and Pinedale Christian Church in Winston-Salem. She served as pastor at Westfield Baptist Church in Dunn and minister for children and outreach at First Baptist Church in Wilson. She was ordained to the gospel ministry July 13, 1997 at First Baptist Church, Laurinburg. She was preceded in death by her father, Angus Simpson, and mother, Euphie Melvin Simpson. She is survived by many devoted friends, colleagues and one god-daughter, Alexandra

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embarrassed by such a gesture; she was never one to sing her own praises, though she had a beautiful voice! But how fitting that her legacy will go on for years, blessing generations of women who seek to follow the call of Christ in their lives.

We will miss our sister in Christ. I was planning to nominate her to return to the BWIM,NC Board as soon as possible. She was someone who could generate laughter, ideas, and energy all in the same meeting. She

Convocation 2007

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began with communion, presided over by Jenny Folmar and Robin Hardison of Memorial Baptist Church in Buies Creek, and were reminded that we are invited as we are into Christ's transforming presence. Scholarship recipient Emily Hull of Wake Forest Divinity School helped serve the bread and the cup.

Within this context of worship, in recognition of our call to minister to one another, we presented the BWIM,NC Church Award to Memorial Baptist Church in Buies Creek for their consistent support of women in ministry and commitment to offering women a chance to use their gifts. Rev. David Whiteman received the award on the church's behalf and a number of MBC members were also present in support. The Anne Thomas Neil Award, which goes to a person who has "gone the extra mile" in championing women in ministry, went posthumously to Kay Simpson. Her former colleague and dear friend, Tom Riley, accepted the award for Kay. Tom voiced well why Kay was receiving this award, reminding us all of why we loved her.

We should note that Anne Thomas Neil was worshiping with us and was as gracious as ever in her support and affirmation of our efforts on behalf of Baptist women in ministry. A book about her life and ministry is being published later this year by the Advent Center for Spirituality. Please check their website for ordering information. We thank God for Rev. Anne.

worked hard to follow through and bring those ideas into reality. And she also had the knack of getting other people to volunteer for things they would never think of doing on their own. All in all, an ideal board member!

We thank God for blessing us with Kay Simpson. We are the richer for having loved her and we are a better organization for having had her leadership and friendship. She was a tireless worker in God's vineyard, a good and faithful servant. To God be the glory as we begin the Kay Simpson Memorial Scholarship. Amen.



BWIM,NC also recognized our long-time treasurer, Velma Ferrell. She served us for over 15 years! We also thank God for Velma.

We were then led in worship by the lovely soprano voice of Mary Keltner, singing *Find us Faithful*. The words of that song led perfectly into the homily based on Ruth gleaning in the fields. Alicia Davis Porterfield reminded us that Ruth's gleaning was a necessity for her and Naomi's survival. In that desperate time, God provided the practice of gleaning, the right field to glean in, and more than enough to help both Ruth and Naomi not only survive, but flourish. As modern listeners, Ruth's story shows us that God helps us glean spiritually from those who have nurtured and fed us in the faith. Those "Cloud of Witnesses" from whom we have gleaned will be honored in our 25th Anniversary "Cloud of Witnesses" Quilt (please see insert). What a wonderful way to thank God for providing us with what we needed as we gleaned and to honor those from whom we have gleaned.

Worship ended with BWIM,NC's favorite hymn *The Servant Song*. Conversations and connections occurred and spilled over into lunch. We look forward to gathering for our 25th Anniversary Convocation April 11th. More details to follow. Thanks to all who participated in our worship service. It was good to be together to worship our God who has blessed us so richly.

Eulogy by Lynn Tillman

I'm proud of you. You've been faithful.
--Kay

As I stood in disbelief Tuesday night watching and waiting for answers, I kept coming back to the same question: "Who's going to believe in me now?" As I watched close friends stare into space, sit on the ground with head hung low, or listen to saved voicemails just to hear her voice, I knew they were thinking the same thing. I remembered the many times she offered her advice and wisdom as our pastor during troublesome times. I remembered the many hours of laughter sitting around talking as friends. And I remembered going to Kay's side to comfort her only to once again realize that Kay was the one doing the comforting. Kay had the amazing ability to say just the right word, do just the right thing, or talk you into doing something that you really didn't want to do only to understand that it was just what you needed. She believed in us even when there was no reason. She loved us unconditionally and taught us how to do the same.

As I have been trying to grieve through my confusion, wanting to scream and be angry at her because there were still so many things I wanted to talk with her about, learn from her, and live with her, I realized I still can learn from Kay. I can learn from her example, her life - the life that she lived out daily, not waiting for tomorrow.

As I read through many of Kay's emails sent to friends, listened to voicemails that hadn't been erased, or shared vivid memories that will be cherished forever, I realized Kay is still speaking through them. Here are HER treasured words that have brought comfort in the past, rearranged this way, to again give us comfort and direction now...

Hey there, it's Kay. I'm so sorry for what you've been through. I feel bad for all the turmoil that life has caused for a ton of good people. I trust that you already know that my heart just aches for you. Many of us feel frustrated with ourselves and each

other. I know that all things work together for good to those who serve God. So I trust that as I act moment by moment to follow God's leading, God will work through my decisions. In any event, I know with assurance that God is already working. God's action is to bring about good things for you and for the body of Christ. There's no doubt. We just have to wait. As we've all figured out for one reason or another, life isn't fair and justice is hard to find. Mostly I'd like for you to get through it. It happened and requires you to work in order to get through it--but I pray that you get THROUGH it rather than remain in it.

So I hope you'll spend exactly the right amount of time processing it all and doing what it takes to attend to it so that it will be well and truly over. There are so many things to say on the order of Eleanor Roosevelt's assertion that we become only as strong as the things that we overcome. I'm sure you've heard, thought of, considered and absorbed all those things that ring true for you.

If I could offer great insight and encouragement, I would but I know that you're way ahead of me in making sense and finding meaning in it all. I enjoy knowing you. I love you very much. Enough of my rambling, I'll be resting and taking it easy for the foreseeable future and spending time singing for my daddy because he loves to hear me sing. I know that many matters will settle out, and authentic communication and trust is required. You take my love and respect and appreciation with you wherever you go!

I'm proud of you. You've been faithful.
--Kay

(written by Lynn Tillman, November 18, 2006 for the death and resurrection service honoring Kay Simpson. Kay's "letter" was composed using various emails and voicemails Kay herself had sent to the people she loved.)

Dubs, of Hickory.

She previously served as area director of resource development for the Fayetteville Area Habitat for Humanity, and as a voice/ piano teacher at The Snyder Music Academy in Fayetteville. Rev. Simpson also served as the associate dean for admissions and financial aid at St. Andrews College in Laurinburg, and as assistant director of admissions at Salem Academy in WS.

Rev. Simpson received a M.Div. from Duke University Divinity School in Durham and a BA in music and economics from Salem College in WS. She was currently enrolled in the doctor of ministry degree at Campbell University Divinity School in Buies Creek.

She also served on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention of NC, the coordinating council of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of NC, the board of directors and convener for BWM,NC. She was a zealous advocate for women in ministry. She was on the national alumni council for Duke Divinity School. Rev. Simpson also served as a chaplain at Betsy Johnson Regional Hospital in Dunn and as a clinical pastoral education resident at Nash Health Care Systems in Rocky Mount. She participated in missions in Haiti, Kentucky and Arkansas.

Memorial services will be held at 11 a.m. Sat., Nov. 18 at Memorial Baptist Church in Buies Creek. Dr. David Whiteman will officiate. Memorials can be made to BWM,NC for its scholarship endowment which was envisioned and initiated by Rev. Simpson. Checks written to BWM,NC can be mailed to JJ Johnson 2719 Gordon St. Raleigh, NC 27608.

**BAPTIST WOMEN IN
MINISTRY OF NC**

9800 Chander Drive
Raleigh, NC 27615



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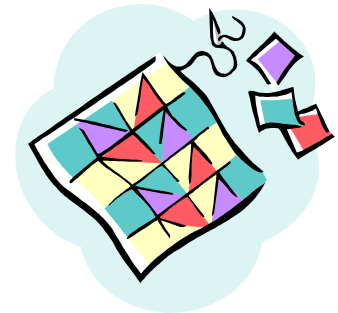
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**A Cloud of Witnesses
BWIM,NC's
25th Anniversary
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November 15, 2007**

See Insert

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